

Public Draft



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Region One
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Ref:DV075-04
May 14, 2004

TO: Governor's Office, Attn: Todd O'Hair, PO Box 200801, Helena, 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, PO Box 201704, Helena, 59620-1704
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Planning, Prevention & Assistance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
*Dept. of Environmental Quality, Permitting Compliance, PO Box 200901, Helena, 59620-0901
DNRC, PO Box 201601, Helena, 59620-1601; Kalispell: Jon Dahlberg
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks - Director's Office: Reg Peterson; Parks: Allan Kuser; Design &
Construction: Paul Valle; Legal Unit: Brandi Fisher
*SHPO, PO Box 201202, Helena, 59620-1202
*Montana State Library, 1515 East Sixth Ave., Helena, 59620-1800 (e-mailed)
Jim Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, PO Box 1184, Helena, 59624
George Ochenski, PO Box 689, Helena, 59624
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation, PO Box 728, Libby, 59923
Montana State Parks Association, PO Box 699, Billings, 59103
Joe Gutkoski, President, Montana River Action Network, 304 N 18th Ave., Bozeman, 59715
Rep. Verdel Jackson, 555 Wagner Lane, Kalispell, 59901
Rep. Bob Lawson, Box 686, Whitefish, 59937
Rep. Stanley Fisher, 76 Golf Terrace Drive, Bigfork, 59911-6252
Sen. Bob Keenan, Box 697, Bigfork, 59911-0697
Sen Bob DePratu, PO Box 1217, Whitefish, 59937-1217
Flathead County Commissioners, 800 S Main Street, Kalispell, 59901
Lake County Commissioners, 106 Fourth Avenue E, Polson, 59860
Flathead County Library, 247 First Avenue E, Kalispell, 59901
Flathead County Library, 521 Electric Avenue, Bigfork, 59911

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Region One, has written a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the purpose of installing vault toilets at Swan River, Kokanee Bend, Beaver Lake, and Thompson Chain of Lakes Little McGregor, McGregor Lake, and Lower Thompson Lake. The toilets would be installed as funding and logistics allow.

The draft EA will be out for public review until June 15, 2004. Please direct your questions or comments to Regional Parks Manager Marty Watkins, FWP, 490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell, MT 59901, or e-mail mawatkins@state.mt.us.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Vincent
Regional Supervisor

/ni
Enclosure

FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS Region One Fishing Access Sites Vault Toilet Installations

MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action:

The proposed action is to install vault toilets at Swan River, Kokanee Bend, Beaver Lake, and Thompson Chain of Lakes Little McGregor Site B1, McGregor Lake Site A3, and Lower Thompson Lake Site C10. Currently there are no vault toilets at these locations, although a porta-potty is rented seasonally at Little McGregor. The sealed vault toilets will be the same design used at other fishing access sites, consisting of a sealed concrete vault, with an aggregate-surface concrete toilet building. The toilets would be installed as funding and logistics allow.

At Beaver Lake, the land that the fishing access site (FAS) is on is owned by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, State Lands Division, and leased by Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Issues with the current lease will have to be resolved before this vault toilet is installed.

2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: Montana Codes Annotated 23-1-101

3. Name of Project: Fishing Access Sites Vault Toilet Installations

4. Name, Address, and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency):

5. If Applicable:

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date:	July 1, 2004
Estimated Completion Date:	July 1, 2007
Current Status of Project Design (% complete):	20%

6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range, and township):

See Appendix A for locations:

Swan River:	S2, T26N, R19W: 3 miles east of Bigfork on Hwy 209, then 1.5 miles south and east on county road at Ferndale, Lake County.
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Kokanee Bend: S19, T30N, R20W: 14 miles north of Kalispell on Hwy 2 to milepost 136, then 3 miles west on county road, Flathead County.

Beaver Lake: S20, T31N, R22W: 6 ½ miles northwest of Whitefish on Hwy 93, right on Beaver Lake Road, follow signs for 1.5 miles, Flathead County.

Thompson Chain of Lakes:

Little McGregor B1: S9, T26N, R25W: Highway 2, 40 miles west of Kalispell, turn north on access road, 1.5 miles, Flathead County.

McGregor A3: S4, T26N, R25W: Highway 2, 28 miles west of Kalispell, turn south on access road, 1 mile, Flathead County.

Lower Thompson C10: S13, T26N, R28W: 45 miles west of Kalispell on Highway 2, turn south on the Lang Creek cutoff road, and north on the ACM Road, travel approximately 1 mile, Flathead County.

7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

	Acre		Acres
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	_____
residential	_____		
industrial	_____	(e) Productive:	
		irrigated cropland ..	_____
(b) Open	2	dry cropland	_____
		forestry	_____
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas ...	_____	rangeland	_____
		other	_____

8. Map/Site Plan: Attach an original 8½" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

See Appendix A.

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project, Including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to install vault toilets at Swan River, Kokanee Bend, Beaver Lake, and Thompson Chain of Lakes Little McGregor Site B1, McGregor Lake Site A3, and Lower Thompson Lake Site C10. Currently there are no vault toilets at these locations, although a porta-potty is rented seasonally at Little McGregor. The sealed vault toilets will be the same design used at other fishing access sites, consisting of a sealed concrete vault, with an aggregate-surface concrete toilet building. The toilets would be installed as funding and logistics allow.

The benefit of this project would be the availability of sanitary facilities to the public, the reduction in waste materials being left on the ground, and protection of the groundwater by the use of sealed vaults.

The cost of the project will be felt in the purchase of the vault and the required upkeep and maintenance.

10. Listing of Any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency That Has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
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(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Evaluation of the impacts of the proposed action, including secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical and human environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
>a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			x			1b
>c. Destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition, or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream, or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other (list)						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1b. Soil disturbance and compaction will occur during construction. After the vaults are installed, native grasses will be planted to reduce erosion and the invasion of noxious weeds.

- ⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- > Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- ◆ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ◆◆ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT [⚙]				Can Impact Be Mitigated [⚙]	Comment Index
	Unknown [⚙]	None	Minor [⚙]	Potentially Significant		
➤a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13c.)			x			2a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			x			2b
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		x				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		x				
♦e. For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.)		x				
f. Other						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2a and b: The machinery necessary to excavate for the vault installation will cause some air pollution, which will dissipate once the construction is complete. Vault toilets can cause odors due to their content. The vault planned for these sites are the "Sweet Smelling Toilet" design, which are designed to minimize odors.

⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

➤ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water-related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				3f
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
♦♦1. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)		X				
♦m. For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)						
n. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3f: Because the vaults are sealed, and septage is removed via pumping, any possible effects on groundwater would be positive as people would no longer use hand-dug pits or other means of taking care of sanitation needs.

- ⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT [⚙]				Can Impact Be Mitigated [⚙]	Comment Index
	Unknown [⚙]	None	Minor [⚙]	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity, or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			x		Y	4e
♦♦f. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		x				
g. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4e. Ground disturbance caused by excavating to install the sealed vaults may increase the incidence of noxious weeds. The disturbed areas will be seeded with native grass mixes to reduce noxious weed invasion. In addition, the areas are incorporated into the Region's Weed Management Program and will be treated biologically, mechanically, or chemically, as the need arises.



Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.



Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).



Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.



Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest, or other human activity)?		X				
♦♦h. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)		X				
♦i. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)		X				
j. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- ⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			x		N	6a
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?			x		Y	6b
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		x				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		x				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a and b: During construction, the use of equipment will increase noise levels and may cause a nuisance to people camping or living in the adjacent area. Care will be taken to do all mechanized work after 8:00 a.m. and before 5:00 p.m. to avoid disturbance as much as possible. In addition, work will take place outside of the busy recreation season from June 1 to September 15.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):



Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.



Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).



Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.



Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a.)		X				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):



Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.



Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).



Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.



Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:			x		N	10a
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electrical power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?			x		N	10d
>e. Define projected revenue sources.						
>f. Define projected maintenance costs.						
g. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a: The installation of new facilities will require personnel and funds to service the facilities once they are installed. Finding has been requested through the EPP process to request the necessary personnel and funding.

10d: When the vault toilets are cleaned, a generator is used with a power washer. This will require the use of gasoline to run the generator. In addition additional miles will be driven by the state to service these facilities.



Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.



Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).



Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.



Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT [⊗]				Can Impact Be Mitigated [⊗]	Comment Index
	Unknown [⊗]	None	Minor [⊗]	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista, or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
➤c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach tourism report.)			x		N	11c
♦d. For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails, or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.)		x				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11c: The installation of toilet facilities will improve the quality of recreation at these sites.

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT [⊗]				Can Impact Be Mitigated [⊗]	Comment Index
	Unknown [⊗]	None	Minor [⊗]	Potentially Significant		
➤a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure, or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
♦♦d. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12a.)		X				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):



Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.



Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).



Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.



Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole,:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources, which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard, or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
♦f. For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)		X				
♦♦g. For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- ⚙ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CONTINUED)

- 1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no-action alternative) to the proposed action, whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider; and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:**

Two alternatives are available: Install the vault toilets or to not install them. Installation will increase operational costs and will provide the public with a better, more sanitary, and more satisfactory means to use the amenities in the area. Failing to install vault toilets will continue the waste issues currently at these sites and will, over time, degrade the recreational opportunity at these sites.

- 2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

FWP will conduct any work needing heavy equipment between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to reduce noise impacts on the public. Disturbed soils will be reseeded with native grasses to reduce erosion and reduce the invasion of noxious weed species. The areas are included in the Region One Weed Management Program, and within that program any invasive weeds will be removed mechanically, biologically, or chemically.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

1b. Soil disturbance and compaction will occur during construction. After the vaults are installed, native grasses will be planted to reduce erosion and the invasion of noxious weeds.

2a and b: The machinery necessary to excavate for the vault installation will cause some air pollution, which will dissipate once the construction is complete. Vault toilets can cause odors due to their content. The vault planned for these sites are the "Sweet Smelling Toilet" design, which are designed to minimize odors.

3f: Because the vaults are sealed, and septage is removed via pumping, any possible effects on groundwater would be positive as people would no longer use hand-dug pits or other means of taking care of sanitation needs.

4e. Ground disturbance caused by excavating to install the sealed vaults may increase the incidence of noxious weeds. The disturbed areas will be seeded with native grass mixes to reduce noxious weed invasion. In addition, the areas are incorporated into the Region's Weed Management Program and will be treated biologically, mechanically, or chemically, as the need arises.

6a and b: During construction, the use of equipment will increase noise levels and may cause a nuisance to people camping or living in the adjacent area. Care will be taken to do all mechanized work after 8:00 a.m. and before 5:00 p.m. to avoid disturbance as much as possible. In addition, work will take place outside of the busy recreation season from June 1 to September 15.

10a: The installation of new facilities will require personnel and funds to service the facilities once they are installed. Finding has been requested through the EPP process to request the necessary personnel and funding.

10d: When the vault toilets are cleaned, a generator is used with a power washer. This will require the use of gasoline to run the generator. In addition additional miles will be driven by the state to service these facilities.

11c: The installation of toilet facilities will improve the quality of recreation at these sites.

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

- 1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? YES / NO If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:**

Based on the level of impact from these actions an EIS is not required. Because this action will improve recreational quality for the public, reduce pollution from human waste, and will be completed during off-season, impacts are either positive or minimal.

- 2. Describe the level of public involvement for this project, if any; and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances:**

A news release will be placed in the Daily Inter Lake, the Whitefish Pilot, the Bigfork Eagle, and the Western News, as well as posted on the FWP web site. If there is sufficient interest, a public meeting will be held.

- 3. Duration of comment period, if any:** Thirty days, from May 17 through June 15, 2004.
- 4. Name, title, address, and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:**

Marty Watkins, Regional Parks Manager
Fish, Wildlife and Parks
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 751-4573
mawatkins@state.mt.us